

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (currently amended): A hydrous gel comprising a gel comprising at least two polymers ~~comprising selected from the group consisting of polyacrylic acid, sodium polyacrylate and partially neutralized polyacrylate~~ and at least one of polyacrylic acid and sodium polyacrylate crosslinked with an aluminum compound, and water, and an ascorbic acid or a derivative thereof, wherein the pH when said hydrous gel is 100-fold diluted with purified water is from 6.5 to 8.5.
2. (original): The hydrous gel as claimed in claim 1, wherein said pH is from 7.0 to 8.0.
3. (original): The hydrous gel as claimed in claim 1 or 2, wherein the aluminum compound is magnesium hydroxide-aluminum hydroxide co-precipitate.
4. (currently amended): The hydrous gel as claimed in ~~any one of claims 1 to 3~~ claim 1 or 2, wherein the aluminum compound content is from 0.01 to 10 parts by mass per 100 parts by mass of said hydrous gel.
5. (currently amended): The hydrous gel as claimed in ~~any one of claims 1 to 4~~ claim 1 or 2, wherein the content of the ascorbic acid or the derivative thereof is from 0.01 to 10 parts by mass per 100 parts by mass of said hydrous gel.
6. (currently amended): The hydrous gel as claimed in ~~any one of claims 1 to 5~~ claim 1 or 2, wherein the ascorbic acid derivative is ascorbic acid-2-phosphoric ester or a salt thereof.

7. (currently amended): The hydrous gel as claimed in ~~any one of claims 1 to 6~~ claim 1 or 2, wherein said hydrous gel comprises a polyhydric alcohol.

8. (currently amended): The hydrous gel as claimed in ~~any one of claims 1 to 7~~ claim 1 or 2, wherein when said hydrous gel is formed into a film having a thickness of 0.5 mm and exposed to 25°C and 60% at relative humidity for 24 hours and then the tackiness on the surface thereof is measured according to the Tack Test Method of JIS Z0237, the ball tack value at an inclined angle of 30° is 10 or more.

9. (withdrawn): A process for producing a hydrous gel, comprising preparing a mixture containing at least two polymers selected from the group consisting of polyacrylic acid, sodium polyacrylate and partially neutralized polyacrylate, an aluminum compound, water and an ascorbic acid or a derivative thereof, and heating said mixture at 25 to 65°C.

10. (withdrawn): The process for producing a hydrous gel as claimed in claim 9, wherein the pH when said hydrous gel is 100-fold diluted with purified water is adjusted to 6.5 to 8.5.

11. (withdrawn): The process for producing a hydrous gel as claimed in claim 10, wherein the pH is adjusted to 7.0 to 8.0.

12. (withdrawn): A cosmetic material comprising a hydrous gel claimed in any one of claims 1 to 8.

13. (withdrawn): A preparation for external application comprising a hydrous gel claimed in any one of claims 1 to 8.